

REMARKS

Claims 11, 12, and 14-21 remain in this application. Claims 1-10 were previously canceled, and new claims 22-31 are added. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Independent claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,780,785 to Eckel in view of U.S. Patent 3,712,413 to Eckel and U.S. Patent 6,035,965 to Fujiwara et al. Reconsideration is requested.

Currently amended claim 11 defines structured pre-form bodies comprising, in addition to other elements, columns positioned directly in front of or on a base layer with each column array having no symmetry. A pre-form structure body with a column array having no symmetry (i.e., no plane of symmetry) is illustrated by way of example in Figure 1 of the present application. It is to be noted that Figures 2 and 4 of the application show arrangements of several elemental column arrays. The Eckel '785 device does not include columns positioned as claim 11 requires, with each column array having no symmetry as specified, and it is respectfully submitted that the Eckel '785 patent, the Eckel '413 patent, and the Fujiwara et al. patent relied on, taken as a whole, do not suggest the invention as now specified by claim 11. The limitations discussed above are also not suggested by any of the other documents relied on by the Examiner in the rejections of claims 12, 15, and 20.

The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious "to modify the invention of Eckel '785 to include the teachings of Eckel '413 and Fujiwara et al." It is unclear from this statement, however, in what way the Examiner proposes to modify the Eckel '785 device. Nothing in either the Eckel '413 disclosure or the Fujiwara et al. disclosure, moreover, suggests the "advantage" proposed as a rationale for modifying the Eckel '785 device set forth by the Examiner. Although the Examiner's comments in the second paragraph of section 6 on page 6 of the Office Action are noted, the foregoing comments are not simply an attack on any individual reference.

The Examiner's comments in the final paragraph of section 6 on page 6 of the Office Action are also noted. However, it is impossible to conclude that the invention is an obvious combination of arrangements known in the art. The Eckel '785, Eckel '413, and Fujiwara et al. patents, taken as a whole, do not suggest structured pre-form bodies as claim 11 particularly defines which result in the superior sound attenuation properties represented in Figure 9 with minimized lining thickness.

Claim 11 is patentable for reasons discussed above. Claims 12 and 14-21 depend on claim 11 and are patentable as well.

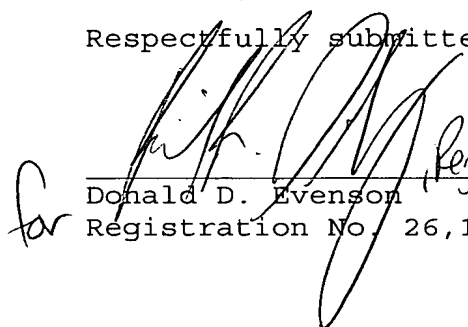
New claim 22 is added to define the invention in terms somewhat different than those of claim 11, and reflects that a pair of columns share a common corner and include particularly

configured sides defining a wide-band tuned moderator gap. A structure as defined by claim 22 is shown, for example, in Figure 1 of this application. New claims 23-31 essentially correspond to claims 12 and 14-21. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 22-31 are also patentable.

This application is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions after considering this Reply, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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